

CLAIMS

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1. A method for charging intelligent network subscribers for message communication, in which method  
account data of a subscriber is maintained in the intelligent network,  
a message communication charging file is formed,  
a message communication bill of the intelligent network subscriber  
is retrieved, and  
the account data of the subscriber is updated with the message  
communication bill.

2. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein  
the subscriber is a subscriber using prepaid connection time,  
a limit value is set for credit data,  
after an update, a check is made to see if the account data is bigger  
than the limit value, and  
if the account data is smaller than the limit value, the use of  
chargeable message communication services is blocked from the subscriber.

3. A method as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the message  
communication bill retrieval and account data update is performed at prede-  
fined intervals.

4. A method as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein  
the account data of the subscriber is maintained in the intelligent  
network by maintaining a first set of account data on the subscriber's balance  
and a second set of account data on the buffer sums changing the balance,  
the account data of the subscriber is updated in two stages.

5. A method as claimed in claim 4, wherein  
- in the first stage, the account data is updated with the message  
communication bill by adding it to the second set of account data,  
- in the second stage, the account data is updated utilizing a charging  
mechanism of the intelligent network by replacing the first set of account  
data with the sum of the first set and the second set of account data and by  
initializing the second set of account data after that.

6. A method as claimed in claim 4 wherein each stage is executed at predefined intervals which need not be the same for both intervals.

5 7. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the message communication is short message communication.

8. A telecommunication system comprising  
an intelligent network or a connection to an intelligent network,  
a network transmitting short messages,  
10 first means for generating a message communication charging file,  
memory for maintaining the account data of the intelligent network subscriber,  
wherein the system also comprises  
second means for retrieving the message communication bill of the  
15 intelligent network subscriber from the charging file, and  
update means responsive to the second means for updating the account data of the intelligent network subscriber with the message communication bill.

20 9. A telecommunication system as claimed in claim 8, wherein the subscriber is a subscriber using prepaid connection time,  
the update means (SCP, SM-Ch, CI) are arranged to check after the update if the account data is bigger than the predefined limit value and, if the account data is not bigger than the limit value, to send information on this  
25 to the network transmitting message communication, and  
the network transmitting message communication (PLMN) is arranged, as a response to the information, to block the transmission of chargeable short messages from said subscriber.

30 10. A system as claimed in claim 9, the system comprising at least one mediation device (MD) which, as a response to the information, blocks the transmission of chargeable message communication from said subscriber.

35 11. A system as claimed in claim 8, 9 or 10, wherein the second means are adapted to retrieve credit data at predefined intervals.

12. A system as claimed in claim 8, 9, or 10 wherein the second means (PSMCC) are arranged to request the update means to update the account data of the intelligent network subscriber, and the update means comprise a charging interface (CI) which is arranged to update the account data of the intelligent network subscriber as a response to said request.

13. A system as claimed in claim 8, 9, or 10, wherein the message communication is short message communication.